

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05

H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02

SS-15 ICA-11 ACDA-12 /093 W

-----009189 031245Z /53

R 030730Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1004

INFO AMEMBASSY ANTANANARIVO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

CINCPAC

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L VICTORIA 0595

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, SHUM, SE

SUBJECT: NINE DETAINEES RELEASED; SECURITY "ALERT" RELAXED

REF: VICTORIA 557 (NOTAL)

1. SEYCHELLES PRESIDENT F.A. RENE ON JULY 1 ORDERED THE RELEASE OF NINE OF TWENTY DETAINEES WHO HAD BEEN KEPT UNDER ARMY GUARD AT CIVILIAN PRISON SINCE APRIL 29 FOR ALLEGED SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES IN CONNECTION WITH COUP PLOT WHICH GOS CLAIMED TO HAVE FOILED. THOSE RELEASED INCLUDED TWO OF THE THREE WOMEN PLACED IN DETENTION AND A MIXED GROUP OF ELDERLY AND NON-INFLUENTIAL FIGURES OF DEPOSED PRESIDENT MANCHAM'S SDP POLITICAL PARTY. CONDITIONS OF RELEASE INCLUDED REQUIREMENT THAT ALL REPORT DAILY TO CENTRAL POLICE STATION. RELEASE, WHICH APPARENTLY WAS DISCUSSED AT UNSCHEDULED CABINET MEETING JUNE 30, HAS FUELED SPECULATION THAT SEVERAL OF REMAINING
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DETAINEES WILL BE RELEASED LATER THIS WEEK.

2. LEADING POLITICAL PERSONALITIES REMAIN IN DETENTION. THESE INCLUDE FORMER M.P.S ROBERT FRICHOT AND DAN PAYET AND OWEN HOAREAU WHO, ALONG WITH PAYET, ATTEMPTED TO REVITALIZE SDP EARLIER THIS YEAR. (VICTORIA 185; VICTORIA 125)
RULING SEYCHELLES PEOPLE'S PROGRESSIVE FRONT (SPPF) ON JUNE 9

ANNOUNCED ITS INTENTION TO ESTABLISH ONE-PARTY STATE
(VICTORIA 531).

3. INDEPENDENT "WEEKEND LIFE" NEWSPAPER WAS GRANTED PERMISSION TO INTERVIEW AND PHOTOGRAPH DETAINEES JUNE 23 AND HAS ACCORDED LEAD STORY COVERAGE TO DETENTIONS IN PAST TWO ISSUES. ACCORDING "LIFE" PUBLISHER BERNARD VERLAQUE, MANY DETAINEES TOLD HIM THEY PLANNED TO EMIGRATE TO U.K. OR AUSTRALIA WHEN RELEASED. PRESIDENT RENE TOLD CHARGE JUNE 29 THAT AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL WHICH HAD MADE INQUIRIES ABOUT DETAINEES HAD BEEN GIVEN "DOCUMENTATION" ON REASONS BEHIND DETENTION ORDER AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATION WERE INVITED TO VISIT SEYCHELLES TO SEE PRISON CONDITIONS AND SPEAK WITH DETAINEES.

4. "FULL SECURITY ALERT", WHICH HAD BEEN IN EFFECT FOR NEARLY TWO WEEKS (REFTEL REFERS), HAS BEEN RELAXED SOMEWHAT IN PAST SEVERAL DAYS THOUGH GOS REMAINS VIGILANT TO POSSIBILITY OF A "MERCENARY INVASION". IN RECENT CONVERSATIONS, PRESIDENT RENE AND MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS OGILVY BERLOUIS EXPRESSED CONSIDERABLE CONCERN ABOUT SUCCESSFUL MERCENARY-LED MAY 13 COUP D'ETAT IN COMOROS AND CONTINUE TO CONTEND THERE EXISTS CONNECTION BETWEEN COMORAN COUP AND ONE ALLEGEDLY PLANNED FOR SEYCHELLES. BOTH INDICATED THAT THE FRENCH MERCENARY BOB DENARD, WHO IS REPORTED TO HAVE MASTERMINDED COMORAN OPERATION, WOULD BE INVOLVED. RENE TOLD CHARGE THAT,
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WHILE MANCHAM "HAS NOW BACKED AWAY" FROM ACTIVE PLOTTING, EX-MINISTER DAVID JOUBERT IS CONTINUING HIS EFFORTS TO RAISE FUNDS FOR MERCENARY OPERATION. RENE ALSO SAID HE HAS "EVIDENCE" JOUBERT HAS WAR CHEST OF AT LEAST DOLS 400,000 AND RECRUITED SEVERAL MERCENARIES IN PARIS LAST WEEK.
MATTSON

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